

principles embodied in the ADA to the hundreds of millions of people with disabilities worldwide who have no domestic protection. This is worthy of our leadership. We have everything to gain and nothing to lose by playing the role the world expects of us.

It would be a shame to let the chance pass by to demonstrate political and moral leadership in a process in which the end result can only be the improvement of life for countless millions of people. We can't afford to shortchange this treaty by declaring at the outset our intention not to be a party to it or to participate in a meaningful way in its development.

Just like the ADA, a convention will not be a magic legal solution with the power to create immediate change in the attitudes, cultural perceptions and ignorance that lead to discrimination and human rights abuses of people with disabilities. What it will do is create a place for disability in the human rights framework. It will put disability on the radar screen of governments and societies as a legitimate human rights issue to which they must give heed. It will provide guidance and standards and create a legal obligation for States Parties to respect the rights of this sizable population. It will serve as a powerful advocacy tool for the global disability movement to promote inclusion and equality of opportunity.

Change will be gradual—probably painfully slow. But this is the best first step we can take toward promoting change on a global scale. Our commitment to leadership on disability rights should not end at our shores. This is about 600 million people worldwide whose rights have been ignored for too long.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 28, 2004

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member agrees with the sentiments expressed in an April 22, 2004, Omaha World Herald editorial entitled "A New Fight Against Slavery." This Member commends the article to his colleagues.

A NEW FIGHT AGAINST SLAVERY

Slavery has long been officially illegal in most of the world. Yet de facto slavery continues for hundreds of thousands of women and children kidnapped and exploited as prostitutes, domestic servants or forced laborers.

The revenues generated for criminal enterprises total a staggering \$7 billion a year. The U.S. Intelligence community projects that within a decade, the worldwide returns from criminal trafficking in human beings will exceed those from the sale of illegal narcotics or guns.

Paula J. Dobriansky, U.S. undersecretary of state for global affairs, described the scale of this problem during a recent speech. "Each year," she said, "an estimated 800,000 to 900,000 human beings—mostly women and children in search of a better life—are bought, sold or forced across international borders."

Although most of these cases involve developing and middle-income countries, some of the exploitation reaches U.S. shores. Between 18,000 and 20,000 women and children are coerced into the United States annually by traffickers, Dobriansky said.

Despite the challenge in tackling such a global phenomenon, progress is being made. When a State Department report listed

friendly countries such as South Korea, Greece and Turkey among those failing to address human trafficking, those governments soon ratcheted up their law enforcement efforts.

Greater international cooperation has led to significant arrests. One operation involving 12 countries led last year to the apprehension of 207 suspected traffickers.

In this country, Congress and the White House have cooperated to sharply increase the penalties for such crimes. In early 2004, the federal government was pursuing more than 300 human-trafficking investigations.

Private aid agencies as well as governments are contributing millions of dollars to help resettle women and children and provide them with educational assistance or other help.

The official abolition of slavery was one of the milestones of the 19th century. Successfully choking off the opportunities for human traffickers would be one of the great achievements in the 21st.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY MONTH

HON. LANE EVANS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 28, 2004

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, today, I want to acknowledge April as Occupational Therapy Month. Occupational therapy is a health, wellness, and rehabilitation service provided by medically qualified professionals whose expertise includes anatomy, physiology, psychology and other disciplines which enable them to provide "skills for the job of living."

Occupational therapy is based on performing the meaningful activities of daily life, such as self-care, education, work, or social interaction, especially to enable or enhance participation in such activities despite impairments or limitations in physical or mental functioning. Occupational therapy helps children with disabilities in schools learn, help adults with mental illness function safely in the community, and helps stroke and other neurological patients recover as much ability as possible to lead full, productive, meaningful lives.

More than 2300 occupational therapists live and practice in the great state of Illinois of which 125 providers reside in my district, in western and central Illinois.

This year's focus for Occupational Therapy Month is older driver issues. The number of Americans aged 65 and older is expected to double to 70 million by the year 2030. With an increasing proportion of elderly persons expected to stay mobile longer, health care professionals, policymakers, and caregivers have raised concerns about addressing driving safety and quality-of-life issues among older adults.

Occupational therapy can optimize and prolong an older driver's ability to drive safely, and ease the transition to other forms of transportation if driving cessation becomes necessary. By identifying strengths as well as physical or cognitive challenges, occupational therapists can evaluate an individual's overall ability by testing his or her vision, reaction time, strength, judgment, and endurance to operate a vehicle safely and recommend assistive devices or behavioral changes to limit risks.

I want to recognize occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants in the im-

portant service they provide to millions of individuals and families and to our nation as a whole.

RECOGNIZING THE CHAMPIONSHIP OF THE MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY DEBATE TEAM

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 28, 2004

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the accomplishment of the Michigan State University Debate Team. On April 6, 2004, The Michigan State University Debate team placed first at the National Debate Tournament held at Catholic University in Washington, DC. The National Debate Tournament is the premier debate tournament in the country. Only seventy-eight of the nation's very best Universities are invited to compete at the highest level of collegiate debate.

The MSU Debate Team has had a long history of success in national debate competition finishing in the Final Four of the National Debate Tournament in 1968, 1998, 2001, 2002 and 2003. In 2000, the Michigan State University finished as a runner up in the competition. However, despite their previous success, the 2004 championship marks the first championship in the school's history. The Michigan State Spartans are only the third public school in the fifty-seven year history of the competition to take the first place honors.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the accomplishment of the Michigan State University Debate Team. I am extremely grateful to represent one of the premier universities in the country and delighted to share their successes with you.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF DAVID SPIRTE, SUPERINTENDENT OF THE FIRE ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE

HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 28, 2004

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor David Spirtes, Superintendent of the Fire Island National Seashore on Long Island and resident of East Moriches, New York, who passed away on Thursday, April 15. A 31-year veteran of the National Park Service, Mr. Spirtes was highly respected for his fair and cooperative nature, as well as his strong environmental stewardship of the parks entrusted to his care. He was a man of integrity, noted for the respect with which he treated others, service to his country in the armed forces, and devotion to his family.

A native of New York, David Spirtes began a long and successful career with the National Park Service 31 years ago. Before securing his first career position with the agency in 1977, he served as a seasonal park ranger at such prestigious parks as the Grand Canyon, Everglades, and White Sands National Monument. Mr. Spirtes quickly rose through the ranks, promoted to subdistrict ranger at Yellowstone National Park, then to chief ranger at